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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/705,964	11/03/2000	Mir Hajmiragha	ASTS-1-1004	5052

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EXAMINER

DAVIS, ZACHARY A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2137

DATE MAILED: 05/06/2004

5

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/705,964

Applicant(s)

HAJMIRAGHA ET AL.

Examiner

Zachary A Davis

Art Unit

2137

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 November 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 November 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☒ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Oath/Declaration

1. The oath or declaration is defective. A new oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identifying this application by application number and filing date is required. See MPEP §§ 602.01 and 602.02.

The oath or declaration is defective because:

The declaration appears to be missing language at the beginning of page 2.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference sign(s) not mentioned in the description:
90. A proposed drawing correction, corrected drawings, or amendment to the specification to add the reference sign(s) in the description, are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

3. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

The specification appears to contain minor typographical errors. For example, on page 5, line 13, it is assumed that “remains” is intended to read “remain”, and on page 8, line 3, it is assumed that the word “the” is to be deleted from the phrase “the either key”. Further, on page 5, it is assumed that “blocks text” in lines 17, 19, and 20, is intended to read “blocks of text”. Applicant’s cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

4. Claims 1, 3, 5, and 7 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 1 reads “blocks text” in line 11 of the claim. It is assumed that this is intended to read “blocks of text”. It is also assumed that “assigning” in line 12 is intended to read “assigned”. Further, it appears that “applied to registered documents” in line 25 is intended to read “registered documents”.

Claim 3 reads “blocks text” in line 8 of the claim. It is assumed that this is intended to read “blocks of text”. Further, it is assumed that “assigning” in line 10 is intended to read “assigned”.

Claim 5 reads “blocks text” in line 9 of the claim. It is assumed that this is intended to read “blocks of text”. It is also assumed that “assigning” in line 10 is intended to read “assigned”.

Claim 7 reads "applied to registered documents" in lines 12-13 of the claim. It is assumed that this is intended to read "registered documents".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the user" in line 13. It is unclear if this refers to "the user of the computer-based system" of lines 4-5 or one of "the one or more other users" of line 11. Further, the claim recites the limitation "the blocks of text" in lines 15 and 23. It is unclear whether this refers to the designated blocks of text, the assigned blocks of text, or the identified blocks of text. Additionally, the limitation "storing the users assigned to the blocks of text of a registered document and digital signature certificates for preregistered users" in lines 23-24 is unclear as to whether the digital signature certificates are stored or assigned. The above limitations render the claim indefinite.

Claim 3 recites the limitation "the user" in line 10. It is unclear if this refers to the users of line 2 or one of the one or more other users of line 8. Further, the claim recites the limitation "the blocks of text" in lines 12 and 17. It is unclear whether this refers to

the designated blocks of text, the assigned blocks of text, or the identified blocks of text. Additionally, the limitation "storing the users assigned to the blocks of text of a registered document and digital signature certificates for users" in lines 17-18 is unclear as to whether the digital signature certificates are stored or assigned. The above limitations render the claim indefinite.

Claim 5 recites the limitation "the user" in line 11. It is unclear if this refers to the user of the computer-based system of lines 3-4 or one of the one or more other users of line 8. Further, the claim recites the limitation "the blocks of text" in lines 13-14. It is unclear whether this refers to the designated blocks of text or the assigned blocks of text. This renders the claim indefinite.

Claim 7 recites the limitation "the associated document" in lines 7-8. The claim also recites the limitations "the users assigned to the blocks of text" in line 11, "the users' selections" in line 13, and "the acceptance or decline options" in line 13. There is insufficient antecedent basis for these limitations in the claim. Further, the limitation "storing the users assigned to the blocks of text of a registered document and digital signature certificates for preregistered users" in lines 11-12 is unclear as to whether the digital signature certificates are stored or assigned. This renders the claim indefinite.

Claims 2, 4, and 6 are rejected due to their dependence on rejected base claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Brown et al, US Patent 6671805.

In reference to Claim 1, Brown discloses a document signing system including a plurality of remotely located computer-based systems (Figure 5, elements 502; column 14, line 65-column 15, line 4), each including a user interface component for displaying an electronic document (column 9, lines 43-45) and designating blocks of text for signature tasks (column 8, lines 35-37), a processing component for identifying designated blocks of text (column 8, lines 35-37), and a browser component including an assigning component for assigning users to blocks of text (column 8, lines 5-7) and a signing component for reviewing (column 13, lines 13-19) and digitally signing blocks of text (column 8, lines 57-59) and selecting an acceptance option (column 13, lines 22-27). Brown further discloses that the system includes a document computer-based system coupled to the remote systems over a network (Figure 5, element 506; column 17, lines 16-18) including a registering component including a component for identifying blocks of text (column 11, lines 65-67) and a component for verifying the correctness of blocks of text (column 22, lines 12-22); a storing component for storing users, digital

signatures, and users' selections (column 9, lines 24-26 and 37-42); and a retrieval component for retrieving documents with signature tasks, stored digital signatures, and users' selections (column 10, lines 1-5; column 18, lines 59-63).

In reference to Claim 2, Brown discloses everything as applied to Claim 1 above, and further discloses assigning a completion deadline (column 19, line 61-column 20, line 5, where the signer is notified if the signing has not been completed by a certain time).

Claims 3 and 4 are method claims corresponding substantially to system claims 1 and 2, respectively, and are rejected by a similar rationale.

In reference to Claim 5, Brown discloses a document signing system including a user interface component for displaying an electronic document (column 9, lines 43-45) and designating blocks of text for signature tasks (column 8, lines 35-37), a processing component for identifying designated blocks of text (column 8, lines 35-37), and a browser component including an assigning component for assigning users to blocks of text (column 8, lines 5-7) and a signing component for reviewing (column 13, lines 13-19) and digitally signing blocks of text (column 8, lines 57-59) and selecting an acceptance option (column 13, lines 22-27).

In reference to Claim 6, Brown discloses everything as applied to Claim 5 above, and further discloses assigning a completion deadline (column 19, line 61-column 20,

line 5, where the signer is notified if the signing has not been completed by a certain time).

In reference to Claim 7, Brown discloses a document signing system including a registering component including a component for identifying blocks of text (column 11, lines 65-67) and a component for verifying the correctness of blocks of text (column 22, lines 12-22); a storing component for storing users, digital signatures, and users' selections (column 9, lines 24-26 and 37-42); and a retrieval component for retrieving documents with signature tasks, stored digital signatures, and users' selections (column 10, lines 1-5; column 18, lines 59-63).

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
 - a. Carter, US Patent 5787175, discloses a method and apparatus providing for multiple users signing a portion of a document.
 - b. Petrogiannis, International Publication WO00/08541, discloses a method for parallel approval of sections of an electronic document by a plurality of users.
 - c. Cox et al, US Patent 6253323, disclose a system for multiple users signing a document over a network.

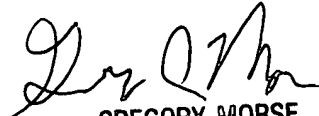
- d. Takaragi et al, US Patent 6341349, disclose a system for multiple digital signatures.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Zachary A Davis whose telephone number is (703) 305-8902. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays 8:30-6:00, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Morse can be reached on (703) 308-4789. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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